

House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE 100TH TEXAN: MARINE STAFF SERGEANT RUSSELL SLAY

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that "never in the history of the world has any soldier sacrificed more for the freedom and liberty of total strangers than the American soldier," said by Zell Miller about the American fighting men.

I rise today to honor a young American marine from my southeast Texas district, Marine Staff Sergeant Russell Slay, who valiantly served the Nation in Iraq and who died doing so. He was a member of the 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion of the 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Russell Slay grew up in my hometown of Humble, Texas. As a student at Humble High School, he played football and was in the band. After he graduated from Humble High School, he started working, but quickly realized that he needed something more in his life. His high school friend Jason Tucker had joined the Marine Corps, and he had made the decision to join him and fight for his country. His father, Roy, a retired Houston police officer and a long-time friend of mine, said of his son, "Russell wanted to be somewhere that would teach and inspire him."

During his 10-year military career, he was trained to drive armored vehicles that carried combat troops from ships to beachheads during amphibious attacks. During his first tour of Iraq in 2002, Slay took part in overtaking Baghdad. He had been in charge of a section of four armored all-terrain vehicles. He left for his second mission on September 11, 2004.

Upon receiving his orders to report for a second tour in Iraq, Staff Sergeant Slay told his family and friends that he did not think he would make it back. A year ago today, Russell Slay's perceptive premonition became a reality. He was the 100th Texas member of the Armed Forces to be killed in Iraq. And, by the way, Mr. Speaker, one out of every 10 Americans wearing

the uniform today is from the State of Texas. Russell Slay was 28 years old. He died in combat with seven others in Fallujah when his armored vehicle was attacked by terrorists.

His funeral was a moving memorial to him as a devoted father, son, and friend. More than 450 people paid their respects to a man that was remembered for his engaging spirit and his love of life. Family and friends expressed that Slay was nothing short of spectacular. His sense of humor was contagious. He was a loving, loyal, and dedicated father.

He left behind a 9-year-old daughter, Kinlee, and a 5-year-old son, Walker. At the funeral, Marine Captain Mike Evans read letters that Slay had prepared for his children in anticipation of his death. He told his daughter, Kinlee: "I love you and never knew what life was before you were born. You will always be Daddy's little girl." He encouraged her to have the best life possible and to be sure that she went to college. He said: "Daddy will always be with you and watching out for you. Hugs and kisses. I'll miss you."

He also wrote to his son, Walker, and told him that watching him grow up was "like reliving his own youth. He said: "You're the best little man there ever was. Be a studious son and stay in school. Always be a man. If you make mistakes, stand up and say so." Russell Slay encouraged his son to have children of his own so he too could feel the joy and happiness that had been brought to him.

He insisted in his letter that his family know how much he loved them, and he wrote: "I promise you my family was my last thought. Don't mourn for me, but celebrate my life."

Nine-year-old daughter Kinlee spoke at her father's funeral, and through tears she talked about playing cars with her dad and brother and shopping at Wal-Mart. She spoke fondly about the weekend family ritual of washing the car.

Charlie Flannigan, who officiated the funeral service, told of Slay's skills in the band that he and his buddies had created in Iraq. They called it the Texas Trio. He said Russell was not the best athlete, but he sure knew how to play a guitar.

Staff Sergeant Russell Slay in 28 short years had already exhibited a lifetime of bravery and boldness. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson once said: "From time to time the tree of liberty must be watered with the blood of tyrants and patriots." Russell Slay was a true American patriot. Russell Slay died for Americans. He died for Iraqis. He died for freedom.

Staff Sergeant Russell Slay, we will never forget the price you paid for America, and we thank you for devoting your life to your country. You are a true American hero. You make us proud.

So Semper Fi, Staff Sergeant Slay, Semper Fi.

HONORING THE AMERICAN FALLEN IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, Veterans Day marks the 87th anniversary of the armistice ending World War I. On this date we honor the soldiers, sailors, marines, and aviators who have protected the United States in times of war.

Today, we are again a Nation at war; 2,058 American military personnel have now given their lives fighting in Iraq; 247 Americans have fallen in Afghanistan.

This Veterans Day we must honor those who have served, those who have been wounded, and those who have fallen.

For this reason, I have introduced a resolution, with 73 cosponsors, honoring each of the fallen from Iraq and Afghanistan by name.

I have also led a bipartisan group of 21 Members of Congress in reading the names of the fallen into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Tonight, we continue this tribute with the names of the most recently fallen, completing all 2,300.

God bless each of the brave Americans, men and women, whose memory we honor tonight; and their families are in our prayers.

Sergeant Eric A. Fifer, Private 1st Class Nicholas J. Greer, Lance Corporal Sergio H. Escobar, Staff Sergeant Gary R. Harper Jr., Staff Sergeant Jerry L. Bonifacio Jr., Specialist Jeremy M. Hodge, Lieutenant Colonel Leon G. James II, Sergeant Leon M. Johnson, Sergeant 1st Class Brandon K. Sneed, Staff Sergeant Matthew A. Kimmell, Sergeant Donald D. Furman, Specialist James T. Grijalva, Master Sergeant Kenneth E. Hunt, Jr., Sergeant Lorenzo Ponce Ruiz, Petty Officer 1st Class Howard E. Babcock IV, Specialist Robert W. Tucker, Specialist Samuel M. Boswell, Specialist Bernard L. Ceo, Sergeant Brian R. Conner, Sergeant Mark P. Adams, Specialist Thomas H. Byrd, Specialist Jeffrey W. Corban, Specialist Richard Allen Hardy, Staff Sergeant Vincent E. Summers, Specialist Timothy D. Watkins, Lance Corporal Daniel Scott R. Bubb, Lance Corporal Chad R. Hildebrandt, Chief Warrant Officer Paul J. Pillen, Lance Corporal Christopher M. Poston, Specialist Lucas A. Frantz, Lance Corporal Norman W. Anderson III, Specialist Daniel D. Bartels, Staff Sergeant Tommy Ike Folks, Jr., Specialist Kendall K. Frederick, Sergeant Arthur A. Mora, Jr., Specialist Russell H. Nahvi, Specialist Jose E. Rosario, Sergeant Jacob D. Dones, Staff Sergeant Dennis P. Merck, Staff Sergeant Richard T. Pummill, Lance Corporal Andrew D. Russoli, Lance Corporal Steven W. Szwydek, Lance Corporal Kenneth J. Butler, Corporal Benny Gray Cockerham III, Corporal Seamus M. Davey, Captain Tyler B. Swisher, Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher W.

Thompson, Staff Sergeant George T. Alexander, Jr., Lance Corporal Jonathan R. Spears, Corporal Benjamin D. Hoeffner, Specialist Christopher T. Monroe, Sergeant Michael T. Robertson, Sergeant 1st Class Ramon A. Acevedoaponte, Staff Sergeant Lewis J. Gentry, Sergeant Evan S. Parker, Master Sergeant Thomas A. Wallsmith, Sergeant James Witkowski, Lance Corporal Robert F. Eckfield, Jr., Lance Corporal Jared J. Kremm, Staff Sergeant Daniel R. Lightner, Jr., Captain Michael J. Mackinnon, Colonel William W. Wood, 1st Lieutenant Debra A. Banaszak, Private 1st Class Dillon M. Jutras, Sergeant Shaker T. Guy, Captain Raymond D. Hill II, Staff Sergeant Travis W. Nixon, Private 1st Class Kenny D. Rojas, Staff Sergeant Joel P. Dameron, Sergeant Michael Paul Hodshire, Specialist William J. Byler, Specialist Derence W. Jack, Private Adam R. "A.J." Johnson, Sergeant 1st Class Matthew R. Kading, Staff Sergeant Wilgene T. Lieto.

Mr. Speaker, Veterans Day is Friday. Let us remember each of these fallen heroes and all who came before them. In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt: "Each of these heroes stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow and increase in its blessings."

Let us also remember the brave men and women who continue to serve our Nation with distinction in Iraq, Afghanistan, and throughout the world. Our thoughts and prayers and gratitude are with you and your families at this time until you return home safely to your fellow man and woman, citizens of this country.

This Friday we will remember the 2,058 military personnel who have fallen in Iraq and the 247 Americans who have fallen in Afghanistan.

□ 1900

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OSBORNE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEARINGS TO ADDRESS WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I might speak at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor last week and read part of an article that appeared on October 23 in the article by

Knight Ridder reporters about the Pentagon program costing taxpayers millions in inflated prices. I came to the floor and I reported that there was some reports that we were paying anywhere from \$20 for a plastic ice tray that should cost about 89 cents. In addition to that, we were paying \$81 for coffee makers that you can buy at a retail store for \$29. In addition, I said that we were paying for a 5-cubic-foot refrigerator \$27,000 that should cost about \$3,000 or \$4,000, and these are the kinds of refrigerators that are put on aircraft.

I wanted to report to the House tonight that I am extremely pleased. I wrote a letter to the chairman and ranking member, Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER and Ranking Member IKE SKELTON, and today we held hearings on this issue of inflated prices. I want to say that the hearing was attended by a fair number of those on the Armed Services Committee.

The witnesses, the Admiral and the Under Secretary that were there present, we were able to ask about these inflated prices. They explained this program that is called the Prime Vendor program. We talked about how it used to be when there were competitive prices, and now we have gone to where there is a middleman that works with the prime vendors.

From that, Mr. Speaker, the reason I wanted to come to the floor tonight is because I was so encouraged by the response of the chairman and the ranking member that next week we are going to bring the prime vendors to the committee to talk about these inflated prices.

Mr. Speaker, as I said today on the Armed Services Committee, there is one thing that the American people, maybe they do not follow us when we talk about deficits and debt and some of these other issues that are very important to the future of this Nation; but there is one thing they know, that if you are paying \$20 for a plastic ice cube tray that you can buy for 89 cents, they know that is not right. I also said to those on the panel today that when you are paying \$24,000 or \$25,000 for a 5-cubic-foot refrigerator, the taxpayers know that is not a wise investment as well.

So tonight I want to give credit to the chairman and the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. It was a very informative hearing today that will lead to additional hearings next week. And what I am hoping will come from this is that the taxpayers will know that we do care about abuses and we do care about inflated prices.

We are going to get to the bottom of this, thanks to the leadership of Chairman HUNTER and Ranking Member SKELTON and the committee members, both Republican and Democrat. We are going to get to the bottom of this and we are going to be able to say to the taxpayers and to the reporters for Knight Ridder that wrote this article that we are going to see that wrongs

are made right and we are going to do exactly what is in the best interests of the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I know that my friend from Texas and my friend from Illinois talked about those who serve in this Nation and who have given their lives. As I close this way all over my district, I will close this way tonight.

I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to please bless their families. I ask God to please hold in his loving arms the families who have given a child, dying for freedom.

IRAQ AND THE 250TH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, usually, when I speak on the House floor each evening, I voice my concern about some of the Bush administration's woe-ful policies in Iraq. Trust me, there is no shortage of material to speak about.

But tonight I want to boast a little bit. I want to share how very proud I am to represent the 250th Military Intelligence Battalion, an Army unit that returned home from Iraq today. They returned home to Marin County, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge in California's Sixth Congressional District.

I had the great pleasure to meet and enjoy dinner with the members of the 250th battalion this past September during my visit to Iraq. Their vigilance and dedication to the welfare of the United States is admirable. Everything they do, they do to serve their country. And I could not be more proud to represent them as their voice in Congress. They are truly American heroes.

Unfortunately, the members of the 250th Military Intelligence Battalion and other military units that have served or are currently serving in Iraq have not always gotten the treatment they deserve from their government. Far too often, the Bush administration has failed to live up to its promise to the troops, whether it is denying them full veterans' benefits, sending them on second, third, and now fourth deployments to Iraq and/or to Afghanistan, or failing to provide them with the life-saving body armor or equipment that they need. One thing is clear: This administration has failed our troops time and again.

Sadly, the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who have been deployed to Iraq, and their families, were not the only ones affected by the war in Iraq. That is because just about every single American will suffer from the billions of dollars in budget cuts to important domestic programs since the U.S. invaded Iraq. These budget cuts are directly related to not only the tax cuts for the wealthiest among us, but also to the ludicrous spending for the military misadventures around the world